



Pre-Release Checklist

Purpose: This pre-release checklist provides many of the necessary details to help ensure a successful release for the Returning Community Member (RCM) and for members of the Angel Team involved in the release process. This checklist is designed to lessen pre-release stress and fear of the unknown; it is also designed to help each RCM (Returning Community Member) feel more comfortable with navigating the post-release process.

Who is this for: This document is intended for Angel Teams to review and prepare for the RCM's release. It's also designed for a visiting chaplain to be able to actively lay groundwork for the RCM's successful reentry while the RCM is still incarcerated.

Instructions: Please review each item below, and begin to research specific answers and local resources who can potentially help with each item. Every item identified on this checklist is an important one to address, and the more prepared the RCM and Angel Team are for the release date, the better chance of a successful re-entry.

1. **CONFIRM THE RCMs RELEASE DATE:** DO NOT ASSUME you know the actual release date...double check the RCMs release date and time with the prison administration desk and confirm with the RCM.
2. **CONFIRM WHO WILL BE PROVIDING THE RCM A RIDE TO HIS/HER FIRST NIGHT OF SHELTER:** In many cases, the state will provide transportation to the first night of shelter. But there are cases where the individual will be given a bus or train pass to the city where they will reside while under supervision like parole or probation. Be sure to clarify with the prison administration desk just who will be providing transportation on the day of the RCMs release.
3. **CONFIRM RELEASE LOCATION & RESEARCH ALL CONDITIONS THE DRIVER MUST BE AWARE OF TO PICK UP THE RCM:** Prisons and jails often have specific rules for how to pick-up the RCM the day of their release. Do the necessary research by reviewing the release procedures on the prisons or jail's website. Prisons are secure locations and they expect you to obey their rules pertaining to release...doing this correctly will save everyone involved from what could be a lot of stress.
4. **CONFIRM THAT THE DRIVER HAS CLEAR DIRECTIONS (INCLUDING CONTACT INFORMATION) TO THE FIRST NIGHT OF SHELTER AND WILL ARRIVE BEFORE SHELTER CLOSES:** Be sure to calculate the exact time it will likely take to go from the prison or jail to the first night of shelter. If you are unfamiliar with the journey, consult a

Pre-Release Checklist

GPS or local map of the area. If possible, arrive at the RCMs shelter early.

5. **PRE-RELEASE PLANNING COURSE:** Does the prison/jail offer pre-release planning courses or workshops? Is the inmate enrolled? What specific information will the inmate be learning that the Angel Team should know about?

6. **TERMS OF RELEASE:** The RCM will be released to:

- Parole
- Probation
- Community supervision
- No supervision required

What are the specific terms of release? Gather name, contact info and physical address of the RCM's supervisor--such as a parole or probation agent. Discuss any possible challenges surrounding specific terms.

7. **DOCUMENTATION:** It is imperative that the inmate has a legitimate (physical copy) of their Birth Certificate when leaving the institution, or a clear means of obtaining it once released. Without a birth certificate no other forms of necessary documentation can be obtained such as a Social Security Card or a Driver's License—which will negatively impact their ability to get employment or shelter.

Find out if:

- The prison provides RCMs with identification such as State-issued ID cards or DOC-issued ID cards?
- Can these cards be exchanged for state-issued ID cards after release?
- Do all RCMs exit the prison with state-issued ID cards; or does the prison refer those without ID cards to the Department of Licensing to obtain them after release?
- If the prison does make referrals to the Department of Licensing, does the RCM need to possess other proofs of identification to obtain a state-issued ID card after release?
- Does the prison provide Social Security cards to exiting RCMs who need them?
- Does the prison refer RCMs to the Social Security Administration to obtain Social Security cards after release?
- Copies of educational diplomas / transcripts

8. **MONEY:** During the release process, will the prison give the RCM "gate money?" How much? Also, in many states, the RCM can apply online or over the phone for monthly financial support by contacting their state's Department of Public Social Services. As an



Pre-Release Checklist

example, as of September 2020 in California, the state will provide a debit card worth \$204 for food as well as cash in the amount of \$221, issued monthly as long as the RCM is actively looking for work. Research specific state programs, and current qualifications / opportunities.

9. **CLOTHING:** What clothing will the RCM have when they leave prison? What clothing will the prison/jail provide? If the prison does provide clothing,, does it need to be returned? By when? Get RCM's t-shirt size for post-release t-shirt gift.
10. **FOOD & HYGIENE:** Does the prison provide RCMs with cash or voucher (food stamp) assistance for food upon release? Does the prison provide a list of affordable food providers in their return communities (including food banks, grocery stores, wholesale food providers)? Does the prison provide basic toiletries upon release (including toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, and hair brush)?
11. **TRANSPORTATION:** Does the prison/jail offer the RCM transportation to their release destination? If not, who will be responsible for meeting the RCM the day of release and providing transportation to their release destination? What's the address of the release destination? What is the normal timing of releases?
12. **HOUSING:** Does the RCM have assigned housing or a list of housing resources? Does the prison/jail offer the RCM money or vouchers for short-term housing? What is the name and address where the RCM will be living once released? If living with a family member, what are their names and contact info? What are the local / state / federal resources available in the county they'll be living in? If not on parole, help arrange short-term interim housing (hotel, motel, extended stay, AirBnB?)
13. **WORK:** Does the RCM have work lined-up after release? Start date? Type of work? What is their supervisor's contact info, including work address? If no work has been lined up, what is the process for finding a job? Does the prison refer released RCMs to workforce development agencies in their return communities? What job skills, education or knowledge does the RCM already have that can be useful in the marketplace? Help write a resume / goals document to begin the job search process.
14. **CHURCH:** What Christian Science churches are near where the RCM will be living? Is there someone at the church who would agree to transport the RCM to and from church? Do members of the local church know that the RCM will be attending their church service? How prepared are the members to welcome the RCM? Should an Angel



Pre-Release Checklist

Team member conduct an orientation meeting for the membership?

15. **SHORT-TERM MENTOR(S):** Who will be mentoring the RCM after release? What will be their short-term mentoring tasks? Have they been trained by EmbracedFully to help the RCM to stay focused on the present? What is the mentor's contact info? Have specific meeting times been set up? Does the RCM have a short-term calendar with tasks to be done?
16. **IMMEDIATE NEEDS/GOALS:** What are the RCM's immediate needs/goals following release? For example, do they need to get acclimated to their city or town? Do they need to know how to use public transportation? Do they need help learning how to use their smartphone? Or, are they concerned about reuniting/meeting with family and old friends? Make a list of needs/goals and see if there are any concerns that need to be addressed.
17. **LONG-TERM 6-MONTH CS MENTOR/LIFE COACH:** Finding the right CS Mentor/Life Coach is very important. Is there someone on the Angel Team who has the time and interest in providing this service for a minimum of 6-months? Many of the life coaching tasks will be hands on such as learning how to use an ATM card at a store, how to set up a bank account, how to prepare for a job interview, etc. Will the mentor be effective at coaching the RCM from a Christian Science perspective?
18. **LONGER-TERM GOALS:** What meaningful goals would the RCM like to achieve and by when? Once the RCM has listed their goals, find out why these goals are important? Make sure goals have set timelines. This process can help with establishing accountability once released.
19. **KNOWLEDGE OF TECHNOLOGY:** Does the RCM know how to use a modern smartphone, tablet, or computer? What tech experience do they have? How does the RCM feel about technology? What do they perceive as their biggest technological challenges and fears? Being decently fluent with operating computers can make a difference to their immediate job prospects (Office applications, email, etc). Should you make a list of the RCMs tech goals and concerns?
20. **POST-RELEASE DAILY SCHEDULE:** Discuss how calendars and rigorous scheduling can benefit post-release life. Create a sample weekly calendar schedule, including possible work hours, parole check-in meetings, church attendance, etc. Once the RCM has been



Pre-Release Checklist

released this calendar can be filled in with actual deadlines and real-world appointments. Discuss methods for keeping a schedule independently.

21. **POST-RELEASE KEY CONTACT LIST:** Make a list of the RCM's key contacts—to be uploaded to their phone after release.
22. **POST-RELEASE PROGRAMS & PRISON PARTNERSHIPS:** Find out what post-release programs are court mandated? Learn which of the following programs may have a partnership with the prison:
- Department of Motor Vehicles
 - Social Security Administration
 - Veterans Affairs
 - Health and Human Services
 - Mental health center/agency
 - Probation/Extended supervision
 - Courts
 - Sheriff's Department/Local jail
 - Other community-based service providers